

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 28, 2008

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this important *Conservation Agriculture Carbon Offset Consultation*. I applaud the Conservation Technology Information Center and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for convening this meeting on an issue of critical importance – and opportunity – for Hoosiers, our nation and the global community. The dialogue in which you are participating, and your ongoing work to be responsible stewards of the environment, is a critical component of realizing the economic potential of a secure and sustainable energy future.

America's voracious appetite for energy exists in a world of unprecedented competition for increasingly scarce supplies. To meet surging oil demand, the world will become even more dependent on OPEC and unpredictable oil-rich countries like Russia, Iran, and Venezuela. Many of today's foreign policy and security challenges are increased by U.S. oil dependence. Meanwhile, efforts to address the potentially devastating impacts of climate change also depend on moving our energy future beyond an overwhelming reliance on fossil fuels.

Energy security and environmental stewardship through diversification, improved efficiency and use of agriculture and forestry to sequester carbon can transform our economy, bringing new opportunities for jobs and economic growth in areas of the country that have struggled in recent years. The United States and other nations should recognize that steps to address energy security and climate change involve economic opportunities, not just constraints. I have found this to be true in my own life. For a number of years now, I have dedicated about a third of the 604-acre Lugar family farm in Marion County to growing black walnut and other hardwood trees. As these majestic trees grow, they absorb and store carbon from the air around Indianapolis – about 400 tons of carbon dioxide in 2007 alone. To highlight the opportunities of participating in markets for carbon sequestration, the Lugar Stock Farm has entered into a binding contract with the Chicago Climate Exchange.

Opportunities to bolster rural economies, promote improved agricultural practices and preserve the world's valuable forests can be found across Indiana – and around the world, particularly in developing nations. I thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,



Richard G. Lugar
United States Senator for Indiana